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Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Co-Chairmen of International Conference on former Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen, welcome unconditional cease-fire declared today in Sarajevo by military commanders of three parties to conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ In Somalia, Pakistani battalion has been deployed at Mogadishu International Airport to give security control of terminal to United Nations troops; local personnel integrated into operation for external security of airport.

+ French authorities conclude that accounts transmitted to them on human rights violations in Zagreb and Belgrade testify to "ethnic cleansing"; Switzerland offers to act as intermediary for communications of information to United Nations.

+ Croatia has called for expansion of UNPROFOR mandate, to include possibility of using force to implement the Security Council resolutions on former Yugoslavia.

+ World Food Programme extends food aid worth $171 million to Afghan refugees and returnees; Third Committee hears from High Commissioner for Refugees and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

+ Head of Eighth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development appeals to United States and European Community to resolve, through negotiations, their current dispute over agricultural subsidies.

+ Special meeting of First Committee being convened to consider report of Secretary-General entitled "New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post-Cold War Era".

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In Geneva, the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen, have welcomed the unconditional cease-fire declared today in Sarajevo by the military commanders of the three

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parties to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to a statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Co-Chairmen, they said the international community expected all three sides to live up to their commitment.

The Security Council continued its consultations this afternoon on former Yugoslavia with a view to a formal meeting following consultations.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, Ismat Kittani, announced today that the 500-member Pakistani battalion had been deployed at Mogadishu International Airport, giving security control of the airport terminal to United Nations troops, while local personnel had been integrated into the operation for external security of the airport.

The announcement was transmitted to correspondents at Headquarters today by a United Nations spokesman who said the integration of local personnel presented an "excellent example" of the working cooperation between the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNSOM) and the authorities to facilitate the implementation of the Security Council mandate. The spokesman said it was hoped that the integration of Somalis in all activities "was essential to build mutual trust and confidence".

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French authorities have concluded that accounts transmitted to them on human rights violations in Zagreb and Belgrade testify to "ethnic cleansing".

In a letter to the President of the Security Council, dated 5 November, French authorities indicated that the information gathered in Zagreb had been provided by victims and by European observers, while the information collected in Belgrade was drawn largely from the press or military and church sources. The accounts bear witness to "occupation and destruction of a village, execution of some of the inhabitants, and transfer of others to camps where they were subjected to maltreatment". The most influential inhabitants were eliminated, and the others were exchanged on condition that they abandon their property and declare that they would not return to their village. "This process generally takes place in the context of a policy of ethnic cleansing", the letter concluded.

The letter, which was transmitted by French Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Jean-Bernard Mérimée, said France would transmit any new piece of information communicated to it concerning violations of humanitarian law in former Yugoslavia to the Council and to the Commission of Experts set up by the Council to investigate such violations.

In a related development, the Swiss Permanent Observer to the United Nations has informed the Secretary-General in a letter, dated 4 November, that about 100 Swiss delegates and personnel of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are providing evidence of violations of humanitarian law in former Yugoslavia.

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The Swiss letter also offered Switzerland's assistance in acting as an intermediary in the event that persons who had left the war zones for Switzerland would wish to communicate information to the United Nations.
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While welcoming the achievements of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), Croatia has called for an expansion of its mandate, to include the possibility of using force to implement the Security Council resolutions on the former Yugoslavia, and to help reintegrate the occupied zones of Croatia into its governmental, legal and economic system.

In a letter to the Secretary-General dated 5 November, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman credited UNPROFOR with implementing the Vance Plan with respect to the withdrawal of the Yugoslav army from the southern parts of Croatia. But, he said, new Serbian conquests and the formation of new Serbian militia in the United Nations Protected Area (UNPA) had escalated the refugee crisis to "the brink of an uncontrollable explosion".

Mr. Tudjman reaffirmed Croatia's commitment to a peaceful, negotiated settlement. However, he warned that "Croatia cannot tolerate a situation in which there does not seem to appear an end to the encroachment on her sovereignty, territorial integrity and democratic achievement".

In a related development, the Joint Commission established in June to oversee the restoration of Croatian authority in the so-called "Pink Zones" held its eighth meeting at Topusko on Monday, 9 November. The Commission, which brings together representatives of UNPROFOR, the European Community's Monitoring Mission (ECMM), the Croatian Government and the local Serb authorities in the region, expressed its concern at the lack of progress in fulfilling its mission. "Lack of political will to go ahead" was cited by all sides as the reason for the failure.
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The head of the Eighth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) appealed yesterday to the United States and the European Community to resolve, through negotiations, their current dispute over agricultural subsidies, warning that a trade war would be "suicidal" and "catastrophic" for industrialized and developing countries.

Juan Manuel Santos, President of UNCTAD and Minister of Foreign Trade of Colombia, who made the appeal at a press conference at Headquarters before meeting with the Secretary-General, said he would express UNCTAD's concerns over the dispute and ask the Secretary-General to strengthen multilateral economic diplomacy in the same way that the United Nations had increased its role in the political arena. "Both must go hand in hand if the United Nations is to serve the purposes envisioned by its founders", he said.

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He warned that political instability would return, in the case of a trade war, and the "seeds of democracy, so newly planted, might never bear fruit". That was a high price to pay to protect small sectors of the world's two largest economies, he said.

In related news, the observer for the Commission of the European Communities told the Second Committee (Economic and Financial) yesterday that if unilateral sanctions were taken by the United States on the oil-seeds issue, the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations might break down. He regretted that the United States had chosen to ignore the ruling by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) not to allow such sanctions, but adopted an unilateral position which would lead to the imposition of sanctions in 30 days.

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The World Food Programme (WFP) today approved three projects worth $171,359,000 relating to assistance for Afghanistan and Afghan refugees. The operations will provide continued aid to some 2 million Afghan returnees in Pakistan and Iran, as well as renewed support for relief and rehabilitation activities inside Afghanistan. In total, in 1993, the three projects will supply a total of 526,417 metric tons of food.

In a press release issued today, WFP said that 13 years of civil war had left the new Mujahedeen Government with a crisis of dramatic proportions. Many towns, villages and cities had been razed to the ground, and roads and irrigations systems had been destroyed. It would take many years before agricultural production equaled even the pre-war level. With food shipments from the former Soviet Union radically reduced, the annual average wheat deficit was now at about 600,000 tons for a population of about 13 million people (including the returning refugees).

Nearly a million people inside Afghanistan will receive food under the new WFP operation. Some of them are involved in food-for-work projects, through which WFP supports various infrastructure activities such as the repair construction of roads, homes, schools, reservoirs and canals. In order to encourage repatriation of refugees, WFP plans to intensify such activities. It is expected that nearly 22 million workdays will be needed for the reconstruction programme, greatly extending the number of people benefiting from them.

At Headquarters today, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, told the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) that hopes that the end of the cold war might mean an end to refugee problems had not been fulfilled. Speaking as the Committee took up its agenda items on refugees, returnees, displaced persons and humanitarian questions, she said the world's refugee population remained a staggering 17 million. She went on to name a few crisis situations UNHCR had been confronted with -- some 3 million refugees in the former Yugoslavia; more than 420,000 refugees from Somalia into Kenya, and 250,000 refugees from Myanmar into Bangladesh.

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The UNHCR had adopted a three-pronged strategy of prevention, preparedness and solutions which had been tested in the past months, she said. But prevention had also meant direct engagement in situations of open conflict, which had challenged many existing principles and premises.

Also addressing the Committee today, Jan Eliasson, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, stressed that a pooling of resources and a reasonable division of labour in the humanitarian field was needed between the United Nations, Governments, other international and regional organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the non-governmental community.

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A special meeting of the First Committee is being convened tomorrow, 11 November, for consideration of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post-Cold War Era". The report, issued on the occasion of the observance of Disarmament Week, elaborates on the three concepts - integration, globalization and revitalization - which the Secretary-General highlighted in his statement at that meeting, as the foundation stones of an enhanced international effort in the field of disarmament and arms regulation.

Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Vladimir Petrovsky, is expected to attend the meeting.

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